

The Castle of Lies

BY ARTHUR HENRY VESSEY

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CHAPTER XXXI.—Continued.

"Then where?" I demanded impatiently.

"It must be from one of the windows of the story below."

"Well, we shall soon see."

I poised myself to clamber through the window on the broad stone gutter, along which Captain Forbes must have made his way. Then I hesitated.

"What! You are afraid?" cried the woman fiercely. "If so, I will go myself."

"No, I am not afraid," I replied with deliberation. "I am wondering what they will think when they come from the oratory presently, to find me gone. She will think that I am your accomplice."

"I can easily tell the truth."

"They will scarcely believe you. Shall I, or shall I not, tell them of Ferdinand's danger?"

"But will they believe you? While you hesitate Prince Ferdinand may be assassinated. Is this a time for explanations? Say that the fools persist in misunderstanding you, it is only a question of an hour or two at the most before you may tell the truth. Go, and I swear by the cause I hold sacred that if you save him the honor of Sir Mortimer Brett shall yet be saved."

"You have promised much already only to deceive me," I said gloomily.

"But I swear it! They are coming; I heard the door of the oratory open. I hesitated no longer."

CHAPTER XXXII.

I Escape from the Tower.

I clung to my precarious support, lying prostrate on the broad stone gutter. The roar of the swirling river beat at my senses confusedly; the giddy height made my head swim. Something of the horror I had felt in rounding the overhanging shoulder of the mountain with Willoughby that fatal day came to me now.

But presently that giddiness passed. The extraordinary promise of Madame de Varnier rang in my ears. How it was possible for her to explain away Sir Mortimer's damning words if the letters were genuine, I could not see. But this had been a day of miracles. Slowly I made my way toward the first of the flanking towers. The wind struck me with redoubled force as I turned the corner. I heard the ensign above fluttering loudly in the gale.

I looked up. I could see it now. It floated bravely in the spanking breeze. The moon, shining squarely on it, made it even possible for me to distinguish its design. It was the national flag of England, the royal arms in its center. Then I remembered the quotation from the Blue Book I had read early in the morning just before Captain Forbes had signaled to Helena.

"The flag to be used by His Majesty's Diplomatic Servants, whether on shore or embarked on boats, is the Union, with the Royal Arms in the center thereof, surrounded by a green garland."

I had reached my goal now. For some minutes I was compelled to lie inactive, however; for the flag, bellying in the gale, made it impossible for me to grasp the cords.

As I lay there impatient, waiting my chance, I glanced below. I could see plainly the ladder of stones, as Madame de Varnier had called it, the ragged edges of the granite sparkling brightly in the moonlight. I leaned over as far as I dared; they extended as far as I could see.

As my eye traveled the line to the terrace below, the door of the great hall opened. A flood of light irradiated a portion of the terrace. I saw distinctly two figures conversing a moment at the doorway. One of these figures entered the chateau again, but the other, and I had recognized Dr. Starva by his great bulk before the door was shut, stole across the terrace and entered a brougham that stood waiting.

As the carriage disappeared under the covered archway of the passage leading to the village street I made renewed efforts to reach the cords. I could readily guess Dr. Starva's mission. He had gone to meet Prince Ferdinand at the station. Heaven knows how eager I was to be one of the reception committee!

When at last I had caught one of the cords, I severed it thoughtlessly with my penknife. I had not counted on the strength necessary to hold so large a flag. The cord slipped from my hand. I expected the flag to fall and reached out frantically for the other rope. But in some way the rope was not fastened, became entangled in the pulley and the flag, falling halfway down the pole, remained at half-mast.

I now reached up as far as I could, standing on the stone gutter. I was about to sever the other cord, that to which the flag was fastened, when it occurred to me to attempt to disengage the ropes from their fastening at the window below. I was completely successful. I estimated that I had now a length of at least 50 feet.

When I had plaited the cords doubled, and knotted them at intervals to prevent them from slipping through my hand, I made a loophole to slip



In spite of the knots the friction burned my palms as if they were branded by fire. I could not regulate my speed; I was too exhausted for that. I trusted to blind luck; I could only hope that Madame de Varnier's estimate was a conservative one.

How far I actually fell I have no idea. My feet came to the pavement with a force that sent me headlong. But aside from the violent shock and a bruise or two, I had suffered no injury. I struggled thankfully to my feet.

My arm was seized not too gently. If I had wished to make an outcry I should have been prevented by the hand placed at my mouth. I peered into the face of the man who had made me captive. I do not know whether I was more relieved than consternated to recognize Locke as we stood in the shadow.

"Haddon!" he cried, as he made out my features. "Where in hell did you come from?"

"Not hell, Locke; say rather heaven," I pointed upward to the tower.

"You must be in a desperate hurry if you essay the role of an angel coming flying through the air," he said grimly, and the hold on my arm tightened. "Suppose you tell me your errand."

CHAPTER XXXIII.

Prince Ferdinand Comes to the Chateau.

"Locke," I panted, leaning breathless against the wall, "for God's sake let me go. It is a matter of life or death."

"Gently—not so loud."

Again his hand was placed at my mouth. He pulled me back into the

shadow of an angle of the wall. He listened intently.

There was a heavy footfall on the terrace. It sounded nearer. A man, muffled in a cloak, came to the edge of the band of moonlight. He also was listening. Presently he stole softly to the parapet, and looked down at the village. Neither of us spoke until he had resumed his seat upon the great portal of the chateau.

"Who is he?" I whispered.

Locke led me out of hearing, hugging the wall.

"You know as well as I. Now, then, for our deferred talk. This morning I asked you for some explanation of your extraordinary conduct. You chose not to give it to me. Well, I mean to have it now. Come what is the grand trick that sends you flying through the air for a hundred feet at the risk of your neck? It appears to be pressing."

"The death-mask!" I began incoherently. "Prince Ferdinand—"

His grasp tightened. He drew me roughly toward him in his surprise.

"The death-mask! What of it?"

"Starva has lured Prince Ferdinand to the chateau. Already he has gone to meet him at the station. When he returns with him here—"

"Ferdinand comes to meet Sir Mortimer."

"Sir Mortimer, man, is dead."

"Dead! And you have undertaken to fill his place? It is very considerate of you."

His voice vibrated with distrust. But I tried to keep my temper.

"If Ferdinand enters that door with Starva he will never leave it alive, unless help is summoned."

For a moment Locke's suspicions wavered. I had spoken with a solemnity that touched even his skepticism.

"And who has told you this?" he asked slowly.

"Madame de Varnier, the Countess Sarahoff."

"Where is she?"

"I pointed upward."

"In the tower there. The four of us—Captain Forbes, Miss Brett, that

man, and myself—were trapped by Dr. Starva. Don't you see, it was to clear the field for action—to leave him free to accomplish his frightful work unmolested? Locke, this is no time for talk. One of us must conceal himself in the hall there; the other summon help. Are you armed?"

"Rather," he answered grimly. "It is that fact that should show you the uselessness of struggling."

"You have called me a fool more than once," I cried bitterly. "But you are a hundred times a fool that you are blind to the need of action."

"All in good time, my friend. I have still a question or two to ask. If Captain Forbes is imprisoned in the tower there, why did he permit you to play the hero alone? Why is he not with his eyes as you did over the eyes of Miss Brett? It seems to me a little remarkable that he should trust a man who has tricked him more than once."

Locke's cool question staggered me. I had no intention of lying, but my hesitancy did not lessen his growing distrust of my motives.

"There was no more time to explain things to him than there is to you. Besides, he would not have believed me," I muttered.

"As I do not believe you," he answered with some sternness. "As I shall not believe you until you take pains to make things a little more clear. The Countess Sarahoff it is who tells you of the peril of Prince Ferdinand. She takes you into her confidence, that in itself scarcely strengthens my trust of you. But this woman is the accomplice of Dr. Starva. Why, then, is she suddenly so anxious to disconcert his plans?"

"To Cook Rice."

First wash and let soak for a few hours. Have the water boiling hot and throw in a little at a time, so as to keep the water hot. Cook 20 minutes. Salt to taste and add a little butter.

To Keep Meat Warm.

Place the dish containing the meat on a pan of boiling water, cover over with a metal dish cover, and over that place a cloth. The latter will prevent the gravy from drying up and keep the meat moist and juicy.—Home Notes.

Mats for Luncheon.

The crocheted mats for the luncheon table are quite the fashion now. Many a housewife has brought home a set as an evidence of industry during her summer vacation.

Tests of Friendship.

I do not wish to treat friendships lightly, but with roughness. When they are real, they are not glass threads or frost-work, but the solidest thing we know.—Emerson.

"Starva has turned traitor. Have I not told you that he trapped Madame de Varnier with the rest of us?"

I was becoming desperate. The minutes were flying swiftly, and Locke was even more aggressive than when he had first surprised me. To reason with him was impossible unless I told him all. There was no time for that. Force alone could rescue me from my dilemma. If it was hopeless to disarm his suspicions, could I rob him of the revolver in his hip pocket? I made no further attempt to resist. I stood passively, waiting my chance.

"So Starva has turned traitor," Locke questioned ironically. "But if the Countess Sarahoff is so anxious to outwit her former confederate—if the life of Prince Ferdinand is actually in peril and she would save him, why did she not send a man for that desperate work? Why did she not let Captain Forbes escape instead of you? Would he be so adverse to the saving of a king's life? Even if you believe her silly yarn, she has tricked you. You are in her hands; her kisses have bewitched you."

I made no answer to his taunts. Unconsciously he had loosened his hold. I stood as one crushed by his vindictive scorn. My attitude confessed defeat. Locke believed the acted lie when he had contemptuously scoffed at the truth.

"Once more, your errand, and no more lies. You wish to save Ferdinand; you pretend that is the little errand Madame de Varnier sends you on. You would penetrate the stronghold of a desperate band unarmed—your only this morning saw a young girl's life threatened—twice. But this way to be my chance. I hoped to retrieve myself. But fate blocked the way with a fool who cannot see when a man is desperately in earnest. Ferdinand's murder is certain if we lift no hand to save him. Listen: In my pocket is the key to the little door just beyond you. Take it; let yourself into the hall; hide there and use the evidence of your own eyes."

"And let you slip from my hands? Not much! What is that?"

He turned abruptly. The accomplice of Dr. Starva who had been keeping guard before the door was running toward the passage leading from the village street. I could hear distinctly the carriage wheels rumble over the cobblestones.

"For the last time," I besought. "There is not an instant to lose."

Still he hesitated, looking cautiously around the angle of the wall at the approaching carriage. His curiosity made him negligent.

This was my chance. One arm caught him about the neck; the other reached for his weapon. Then I pushed him violently backward and covered him, retreating myself toward the little door, the key in my hand.

"Stand back," I whispered fiercely. "Now take your choice. Go to the village; you can't go too quickly, your stubborn idiot. Come back with gentleness; batter down the door. Or else come with me. You have accused me of cowardice more than once. Show you are a man. Quickly, your choice!"

I heard him chuckling softly to himself in the darkness.

"Well, I'm damned!" he muttered, more than once. "Lead on, Macduff." As my key slipped into the lock he was at my side.

I pushed the little door open.

The hall was empty, but brilliant with the light of a hundred candles. No nook or cranny afforded us a safe hiding-place.

I leaped up the staircase with Locke at my heels. We had reached the gallery as the great door swung open.

Prince Ferdinand entered. Dr. Starva and his ally crowding him close on either side.

The prince stepped into the hall with apparent confidence. But as he heard the door clang behind him he turned alertly to Dr. Starva.

"Where is Madame de Varnier?" he demanded in French.

"Madame de Varnier is unavoidably detained, your Majesty. She has delegated me to receive you. Be assured, your Majesty's welcome shall not be lacking in warmth. Will our Majesty pray be seated? There are urgent matters of state to be discussed."

He pushed the prince brutally into a chair, bending over him with a hideous smile that would have done credit to the devil himself.

Locke and I were crouching behind an antique rug that hung over the gallery rail. He grasped my hand and wrung it hard; it was an apology that he had doubted me, and an assurance that he was with me now heart and soul. He had seen enough already to prove to him that I had spoken the absolute truth.

We listened breathless; yes, and we could see as well, and with no danger of discovery. The rug was a museum specimen, and in places was worn through web and woof; it was a simple matter to widen the slits slightly with our fingers.

"Perhaps your Majesty did not notice the flag that flies at half-mast over the tower," taunted Starva. "At half-mast, your Majesty? Ah, his Majesty's pale, friend Bratnaue."

"His Majesty has imagination," growled the other man.

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TEMPERANCE DEPARTMENT

CONDUCTED BY W. C. T. U.

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

MISS FRIEDA DRESSSEL,

MRS. U. WAY.

REGULATION OR PROHIBITION?

(Suggested by the poem "Fence or Ambulance.")

Is a dangerous traffic as all will confess, Tho' to drink what it deals in is pleasant; But in its strong grasp, it is holding Some princes and full many a peasant. So the people said something would have to be done.

"Please make us a law that will kill it."

But the politicians agreed with the men who sold, and promptly fell in it. "The rich will pass Utah by," they said.

"Prohibition, you know, does not prohibit; 'Twill kill our state, and that stone dead."

To have such a dryness in it. Consider the man who will evade the law;

"Would make him a sneak and a liar." And then they added that dull old saw, "It will make our taxes much higher." Our enemies 'tis clear, have suggested this thing.

'Tis Dims and Kearnsites are talking so loud, 'Tis plain that none of the Republican ring Would be caught in such an impolitic crowd. 'Tis not policy for us to grant this prayer.

'Twould kill the Republicans, you may be sure. Should we endanger the party at this behest, Just to save lives and make homes more pure?

Dear people, if you will but let us suggest, You understand not what you wish; We've framed up a law at the traffic's behest, That we "fair ones" are going to push.

You're excited Be calm now, we pray. These petitions you've signed are N.G. The time you should have made sweet smelling hay.

Was at the conventions; we hope you now see. You should have come there, all good people, en masse, And swept us clear off of our brittle clay feet.

And caused us to see that 'twas just you, And not for the brewers, we annually meet.

But now if we close the saloons, don't you see, What excuse can we make to the traffic, Which contributed coin so much and so free?

Your reasoning's not nearly so graphic. "Let's have saloons fewer in number," we say, And charge more to the men we give rights.

You can't get drunk in a house that's gay. With cut-glass and mirrors and lights. If your boys learn to drink on a polished bar, They'll never (he he) quite drink to excess.

You see, we know best for your boys by far, Than you parents who, of course, only guess. We'll close them at seven; of course, they'll obey.

(Only good men will be on the job.) Your boys can't drink much in a twelve-hour day. There'll be no incentive to rob. For we'll only charge eighteen hundred or so.

They can make that money real easy, you see; For just as many people will come and go. (We came near telling them something tee-hee.)

Only one room within which all men may view. Your boys can't drink much in one room, you'll allow. But if you find that after all this they do,

Why can you make a quite public row. And if a man has been drunk six months before, The bartender sees his law-written fate.

He must wait at least another day more. Before he sells him another bad "skate."

Moral.

The moral to all this the public now knows; We have it from the party paper itself. Count politicians as neither friends nor as foes, To any measure you may have on your shelf. Don't "guess he'll support it," but see that he will.

And hear his promise given in public quite clear; Otherwise when your opponent takes his full tilt, You'll be, poor public, left quite in the rear.

It was a very hopeful fight for absolute prohibition.

In addition to these fights and victories, the people of Ohio have during the past four months, voted 1910 saloons from 62 counties which counties have a population of approximately two million people, while over in Indiana, under the recently enacted law, county after county is voting itself into a "dry" column.

At the present time aggressive fights against the liquor traffic are being pressed in twenty different legislatures, in most of which prospects for temperance victories are good and in no case is there a likelihood of a backward step in temperance legislation or in the enforcement of temperance law. The liquor interests are certainly welcome to all the comfort they are able to get out of the present situation in the various states and the temperance people throughout the nation can certainly ask nothing better than that the present so-called receding temperance wave may continue.—American Issue.

LEGISLATOR'S TRIBUTE TO THE WOMEN OF TENNESSEE.

"Whereas, In the recent fight to redeem our fair state from the control of the whiskey power, certain influences and forces for the attainment of that end have done much for the cause of prohibition; therefore, be it

Resolved, By the fifty-fourth general assembly of the state of Tennessee, that this body express its deepest sense of appreciation and gratitude to the Christian men and women of the state, who, by their words of encouragement, their untiring efforts in behalf of a better and greater Tennessee, have so doing helped to make possible the passage of a state-wide prohibition law. Be it further

Resolved, That to the good and consecrated women of the Tennessee W. C. T. U. we feel a debt of lasting gratitude and are sensitive to the whole work they have accomplished even if the day of seemingly overwhelming odds. Be it further

Resolved, That we recognize and appreciate the interest that the women of Tennessee have manifested in the passage of a state-wide law. That we recognize their right to manifest interest, being forced as they are, to bear and suffer the burden of misery and sorrow that the liquor traffic has for years put upon their weak and defenseless shoulders. Be it further

Resolved, That the clerk of this body be authorized and requested to send a copy of these resolutions to the president of the W. C. T. U., and the same be ordered spread upon the journal of this house."—Union Signal.

NAVY OFFICERS EXPECTED TO DRINK BUT NOT BECOME DRUNK.

Great interest is being manifested in this city over the case of Captain Quattrone, of the battleship Georgia, one of the fleet going around the world. The captain is charged with intoxication at a reception given to the officers of the fleet by the American minister at Tangier. The captain declares that he was ill from long continued duty on the bridge, and only drank one glass of sherry wine and smoked a strong cigar. The report says, however, that the captain was under the influence of liquor, and he may be dismissed from the service in disgrace. The inconsistency of the government in providing liquors for the use of naval officers, and expecting them to indulge without becoming intoxicated, nor under the influence of intoxicants, is one of the problems difficult of solution.

There came to my room recently a "Schedule of supplies for the United States navy (Western Yards), tableware, etc."

Among the articles enumerated are: "For flag officers," 12 decanters, each, half pint, pint and quart. 150 champagne glasses, 150 claret glasses, 150 liquor glasses.

For Captain, 40 decanters of each size, 300 champagne glasses, 300 claret glasses, 300 liquor glasses, 300 sherry glasses.

For Ward room, 80 one-quart decanters, 800 champagne glasses, 1,600 claret glasses, 800 liquor glasses, 800 sherry glasses.

For Junior Officers, 400 champagne glasses, 400 claret glasses, 400 sherry glasses.

And yet, if an officer is overcome, not having the power to resist the almost constant necessity of drinking, he is dismissed in disgrace. "O, consistency, thou art a jewel!"—Union Signal.

PROHIBITION GETTING STRONGER

The interest in Prohibition is waxing stronger and stronger every day. Proof of the blessings attendant upon this great movement is constantly being received. The following facts add fresh laurels to the brow of each one following in the footsteps of Neal Dow, the Martin Luther of the temperance reformation.

Effect of Prohibition on Oklahoma. Oklahoma city, in its population during the past year has been 10,000. The revenue received from its 59 saloons in 1908 amounted to \$29,500. This year minus the saloon and plus an occupation tax, the city pays its mayor and councilmen good salaries. It has made many improvements and is planning to spend half a million dollars more for civic betterment. A large amount of money still remains in the treasury. Fifteen miles of street pavement is being laid. The building permit for one month alone was \$45,000.

Real estate men confess their inability to meet the increasing demand for homes. New residences are constantly being erected. Rents have mounted up to \$25 for four and five room houses. The bank clearings during the month of August, 1908, were nearly half a million dollars above a year ago.

Rents and real estate prices are nearly 50 per cent higher under Prohibition. Every block vacated by a saloon has long since been let for

the transaction of decent business and at an increased rent in nearly every instance. The leading anti-Prohibition newspaper recently noted in its columns the improved condition since the outlawing of the saloons. Prohibition not only prohibits, but it is a success in minimizing crime, lawlessness, disorder and dishonesty. The new Oklahoma is the Kingdom of God coming down out of heaven. Think of the glorious result if every state in the Union would haul down the black flag of license and follow the light of the new star in the west! The result would be a revelation and these words would have a new meaning. It hath not entered into the heart of man what God hath prepared for those that love Him."—From True America.

ANTI-ALCOHOLIC SENTIMENT IN GERMANY

It is heartening to note that anti-alcoholic sentiment is increasing in Germany. The chemical trade of the empire is distributing the following circular letter: "We urge our members to oppose the use of alcohol by all means, by providing non-alcoholic drinks, such as cold coffee and mineral water in summer and hot drinks in winter, also by the dissemination of popular literature, by the erection of proper places of amusement for the hands in large factories, of reading rooms, or other homes, in which alcohol is excluded, by young people's societies which will keep young people off the streets and away from the drinking places."

"No alcohol should be allowed in factories, particularly on account of the danger from accidents. Infringements of the order should be punished. Any who appear on the premises under the influence of liquor should be discharged."—True American.

CANNOT CARRY BOTTLE OF IL-LICIT WHISKEY AROUND IN OKLAHOMA.

Judge Terrell, at Ada, Oklahoma, has just rendered a decision that anybody who carries a bottle of illicit whiskey around in Oklahoma is as guilty as the bootlegger who sold it to him.

In the case in question it developed on the trial that the defendant had purchased a pint of whiskey from a stranger in the rear of a building on a side street in Ada, placed the same in his pocket and proceeded to go down Main street to a point where he was placed under arrest by the sheriff.

The trial was waived the court, the defendant having before a jury, and Judge Terrell, after hearing the evidence, found the defendant guilty of moving intoxicating liquors from one part of the state of Oklahoma to another, as charged, and the information and assessed his punishment at thirty days in jail and a fine of \$75.—American Issue.

MUST BE LICENSED TO DRINK.

If a bill already introduced in the lower house of the New Mexico legislature becomes a law no man can procure a drink of intoxicating liquor unless he has a license, and a heavy penalty is provided in the measure for a bartender or anyone else serving drinks to any person not having such license. The territorial tax to be imposed upon every user of intoxicants is a strong drink as provided for in the bill is \$5.

For ninety days at least, and until a fine of \$400 is paid, a certain South Haven, Mich., druggist will not sell "drug-store," "blind-tiger" or any other kind of liquor. After a most severely fought case consuming three days and the hearing of over fifty witnesses, the druggist was convicted of selling liquor illegally. The court sentenced him to ninety days in jail and \$400 fine and costs.

The Masons and Shriners of Cincinnati have decided to discontinue the use of alcoholic drinks at all banquets, and will serve unfermented grape juice instead.

Possibilities of a Bushel of Corn. The distiller from one bushel of corn makes 4 gallons of whiskey, with the aid of various harmful products and adulteration. These four gallons of whiskey retail for \$16.40.

The farmer who raises the corn gets 50 cents.

The U. S. government, through its tax, gets \$4.40.

The railroad company gets \$1.00.

The drayman who hauls it, gets 15c.

The retailer gets \$7.00.

The man who drinks it, gets drunk. His wife gets hunger and sorrow. His children get rags and insufficient food.

"Only the golden rule of Christ can bring the golden age of man."—Frances Willard.

"During the year 1908 about 11,000 saloons have been voted out of business in the various states of the Union and 32,500 square miles have been added to the 'dry' territory."

There are now nine prohibition states, and the fight will be made in eight others for state wide prohibition, with the prospects favoring the adoption of such a law in at least four of these states.—American Issue.

I. O. G. T.

The entertainment and supper given by the Good Templars, Friday night, Feb. 19, proved to be a success. An excellent program was rendered and was attended by about one hundred people. A nice sum of money was taken in to help along a good cause. We also secured a large class of candidates for Friday night. The committee wishes to thank their many friends who so kindly assisted with the supper and entertainment and hope with their help and encouragement we will prosper.

EFFORT TO REPEAL COUNTY OPTION LAW IN INDIANA.

The house of representatives has passed a bill to repeal the county option law, but it is believed that the senate, if it passes the measure at all, will so amend it that it will not be accepted by the house.

A Man's Woes.

"Has this emporium a meat department?"

"It has. But what are you doing with that scrap of beefsteak?"

"My wife sent it as a sample. Wants me to try to smother it."—Kansas City Journal.